A SKETCH OF GREAT YARMOUTH, IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK: WITH SOME REFLECTIONS ON COLD BATHING.

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A

SKETCH

OF

GREAT YARMOUTH.

IN the year 1777, was publiſhed an elaborate work in quarto, entitled, The Hiſtory and Antiquities of the ancient Burgh of Great Yarmouth, in the County of Norfolk, by Henry Swinden. The patient and indefatigable author begins with its origin from fiſhermen's huts; and traces all particulars until near the preſent time.

In the preſent age, works of this nature are for the moſt part ſaid to be dry, tireſome, and unintereſting: and, I fancy, the reaſon is, becauſe, ſuch works contain little or nothing to pleaſe the imagination, and the reigning taſte for productions of novelty, and of what is called, original genius. If our worthy author had employed his time in writing a Triſtram Shandy, or a Yorick's Sentimental Journey, or a Candidus, inſtead of compiling with great labour and perſeverence, the Hiſtory, &c. of Great Yarmouth, he would, if he had lived, enjoyed the fruits of his toil. A Swift, a Voltaire, a Yorick, and other ſimilar writers, are paid for the ſtriking novelty of genius; and, a Swinden, ſhould be liberally rewarded for unwearied aſſiduity in going through arduous undertakings. I would recommend Mr. Swinden's work to all thoſe who have patience and curioſity to read

it,

it, in order to become acquainted with what relates to the ancient and modern ſtate of Great Yarmouth—As for myſelf, I write upon a different plan, and with other views.

Of the Church or Cathedral.

IT is called St. Nicholas. We will begin with the ſteeple. On the extremity of the ſpire is placed on a ſpindle, the figure of a cock, commonly called a weather cock—alias, wind-cock—every body knows the uſe of a cock. Some are fixed and modified in ſuch manner, that they effectually diſcharge all the electric fire from the building. The late learned Ferguſon, has treated the ſubject with great clearneſs and philoſophy—and has alſo treated on balls. The ſteeple inclines bodily to the eaſtward, from the baſe of the wooden work, upwards; but, on a ſudden towards the top (I mean the ſpire)

ſpire) it bends to the weſtward—then to the eaſt, and again to the weſt—which preſerves the line of direction within the baſe. It ſeems, moreover, crooked from all points of view; but, as I have ſaid, the inclination of the *whole* would ſeem to be chiefly towards the eaſt.

It is ſaid, when pregnant women look at the ſteeple, that ſtrange effects are produced upon the Foetus in utero; but, this, I fancy is merely a ſuperſtitious notion.

The church is ancient, and of gothic ſtructure: and, as buildings of this kind are very common in England, it will be needleſs to ſay any more about it. There is an excellent organ in it: and there are two organiſts, one of whom is blind, but plays exceedingly well.

Where divine ſervice is performed, is very ſpacious and deep; therefore, in order to pleaſe, and to be heard, in ſuch a place,

place, all that a clergyman has to do, is, to ſpeak diſtinctly, and loud; to methodize his diſcourſe, by the *ſimple* plan, and to addreſs himſelf to the heart; for an audible and conſequential voice is, always, neceſſary to the multitude — in ſhort, there is nothing in it—it is only ſpeaking to one man, notwithſtanding there may be a thouſand in the church; for, ſurely, one perſon, one auditor, can never, at the ſame inſtant, poſſeſs the eyes, the ears, the minds, the opinions of all the reſt preſent—it is all a joke; but which, I doubt not, hurts many a young orator, and prevents him from exerting himſelf, and from delivering his diſcourſe as he would, if he were alone, in his own chamber; hence in public, we cannot paſs a juſt judgment on any one.

The church yard is juſt like others in the world. It contains many ſtone parallelograms; ſome placed perpendicularly

at

at the heads of, and others over, the repoſitories of the dead,—and theſe ſtones commonly denote the names, ages, ſex relation-ſhip, &c. of the interred—with here and there portions of poetical lamentations and admonitions—and verſes from the holy writings. In it, and among the promiſcuous croud, is a humble ſtone in memory of a *good* and *honeſt* man, It tells us

He died here, poor man, in commanding his Majeſty's ſloop Alderney, of an univerſal

verſal palſy, leaving behind him a moſt amiable wife and three lovely children in diſtreſſed circumſtances—and O! Webſter, art thou no more!—thou, that haſt ſo often borne the ſcourge of waring elements, and the dread diſtreſſes attending the watery life—thou, that in arbitrary command pleaſed all men—thoſe excepted whoſe gloomy boſoms pleaſure never knew—Thou, that ne'er excited in the breaſt of an inferior, the cutting idea of *paſſive* inferiority—Thou, that in ſocial life, wert the endeared friend, the fond huſband, and the indulgent father!—and art thou no more! O poor Webſter!

The north, and eaſt parts of the church yard, are bounded by the town wall; upon which is a kind of parapet walk.

I am ſorry to ſay it, church yards, ſacred to the dead, are, in this looſe and diſſolute age, too much proſtituted by buſineſs

buſineſs of low intrigue and ſcandalous acts of baſe obſcenity—may it no longer be ſo!

Going from the church yard ſouthward, you enter upon the mall. Here are three decent, but ſhort walks, ſeparated from one another by rows of trees.

This is often uſed by genteel company during the hours of decorum and modeſty—afterwards, it is haunted by males and females who form aſſignations. From theſe walks, you have a view of a large area on the weſt, much occupied by carriages, &c. on account of the Wreſtlers Inn, which you have a view of. The market place is on the ſouth—the church on the north—and the Vicar's houſe, (who, by the bye, is a moſt worthy man,) on the eaſt, with the fiſhermen's hoſpital.

Of

Of the Quay.

IT conſiſts of a pavement and cauſeway; and road or wharf, where veſſels come to take in and deliver cargoes. One may conceive the whole to be a long and broad ſtreet, beginning at the cuſtom-houſe on the north, and ending at what is called the Southgate — having houſes all the way on the eaſtern quarter, and the river Yare on the weſt.

The proſpect here is agreeable and various—objects of commerce, from morning till night— gentle riſings of corn and paſture land; marſhes; branches of the river; and a proſpect of the village called Gorleſton.

The Quay is much frequented, by reaſon of its being the chief ſeat of commercial buſineſs. The gay world alſo mingle here with the croud, in order to take an airing; to exerciſe the limbs; to diſplay external charms; to

attract, perſwade, and captivate by various ways and motions. In doing all which there is a mutual and innocent ſatisfaction enjoyed by both parties; for, as the paſſions of love, pride, ambition and vanity are in action, unaccountable ſenſations enſue: juſt as when one walks in St. James's Park, or ſome ſuch public rendezvous, one is often curiouſly and inexpreſſibly affected.

There are many elegant and modern built houſes upon the Quay; ſome of which have rows of trees before them. One alſo ſees here the Town hall where aſſemblies are held; and the Dutch Chapel, where plays are acted once a year by travelling companies.

It might be wrong to conclude this article without obſerving, that there is a crane which is painted white, and placed in a conſpicuous ſituation.

Of

Of the Danes.

BETWEEN the town-wall and the ſea, there is an extenſive common, called the Dane or Danes, running from north to ſouth nearly (for we don't mind a few points) as far as the Haven's mouth. The ſoil is ſand; hence we may conclude it has been formerly covered by the ſea.

Upon this common are ſeveral wind-mills; there are likewiſe ſeveral detached houſes in the humble ſtyle, with ſmall gardens belonging to them—and poſſeſſed by fiſhermen, &c. On this common, cattle feed; ropes are made; fiſhing nets dried and mended; and many other jobs performed.

From the Southgate, and between the river and the ſea all the way to the fort at the Haven's mouth, this common is very pleaſantly ſituated for the purpoſes of

of walking; riding on horſeback; in the Yarmouth Coaches, and in other carriages.

In walking upon the beach from the Haven's mouth northward, or ſouthward, one may amuſe himſelf agreeably in ſearch of petrifactions; marine productions—and tranſparent ſtones (as well as opaque) of different colours and qualities. But very few ſhells are to be found; and thoſe are of the common kind, and therefore not eſteemed.

Of the Inns.

THE principal Inns or Taverns in Yarmouth are the Wreſtlers, and the Angel, both very good houſes for accommodation, civility, good uſage, and every other circumſtance which a perſon would deſire in ſuch caſes. The Wreſtlers has always been uſed by the naval officers in times of war; mais, ſur ce ſujet

ſujet, il faut que le monde penſe comme bon lui ſemblera; for, I would be very ſorry to endeavour to biaſs the mind of any one in prejudice of mankind——It would be baſe and ungenerous.

There is alſo a very good Inn juſt over the bridge called the Bear; and was it not that it is ſeparated from Yarmouth by the river, we ſhould have included it as one of the principal Inns of the Town. The London coach puts up here.

There are many other houſes in Yarmouth which ſell wines, rum, brandy, gin, and malt liquors of different kinds.

There are alſo a few houſes devoted to Venus; but in a very low ſtyle.

Of the Bathing Houſe.

THE Bathing houſe ſtands cloſe by the beach and near a platform—ſcaffolding, or wharf, called the Jetty. This Bathing Houſe is built of brick—

and

and divided into three chief parts. The firſt whereof, is the bathing place where the reſervoir is: The ſecond is the tea room—alias dreſſing room, for ladies; and the third is do. for gentlemen—From the windows of the two laſt one is often agreeably amuſed by the view of fleets of ſhips paſſing by—ſome to the north, others to the ſouth, &c.

Of the Cold Bath.

COLD Bathing is in uſe among all nations and animals:—In warm climates always; and in great latitudes when the power of the ſun's heat induces relaxation, laſſitude and debility in the animal body.

Inſtinct (I take it) firſt pointed out the neceſſity of the bath in reſpect to cleanlineſs: and reaſon has ſince recommended it in caſes of diſeaſe.

In

In ſome hot countries where pure nature reigns, and where falſe education has not tainted the mind with prejudice and folly, males and females bath promiſcuouſly at noon day: and diſplay a much greater ſhare of real innocence and virtue than in countries of the moſt refined civilization;—whoſe members would be ſhocked at ſuch (as they would term it) groſs indelicacy and ſavage manners—hence a ſource of prejudice—for who can draw the line of decency?

We have entered upon this ſubject with a view to diſcourſe a little on that kind of cold bathing which luxury and effeminacy of manners has adopted: but we ſhall degreſs ſomewhat by juſt quoting a paſſage or two from a celebrated and worthy author. At the ſame time, when I ſpeak ſo harſhly and cynically of that bathing which luxury has invented, I would wiſh to be underſtood, I apply it only to ſuch as

as are robuſt and healthy, whether males or females; for, is it not a ſhame to ſee a great, fat and hairy fellow enter a bathing houſe, and approach the reſervoir in tremor, and be treated therein as if he was a fine, timorous and delicate miſs?

Thomſon in treating of this ſubject, ſays, in his Summer,

> Chear'd by the ſetting beam, the ſprightly youth
> Speeds to the well known pool, &c. ver. 966

And again verſe 979,

> Where Damon ſees his Muſidora.

Who can read the above and not be charmed? who would not bath, and who would not be Damon to view *extatically* his Muſidora? In all this maſterly deſcription, is there one impure idea, one indecent thought? ſhe is a prude,

prude, a canting methodiſt, who ſays there is.

Running waters are preferable for bathing to ſuch as are without motion: but there are many bodies of ſtanding water, which are very pure and fit for this purpoſe; eſpecially when the bottom is not very muddy, and does not abound with inſects.

All ſtagnant water is to be avoided: it may be as cold as running or moving water, and may equally brace up; but it is offenſive and dangerous, becauſe of putridity and noxious exhalations.

For my own part, for the ſake of exerciſe, pleaſure and health, I would prefer the "cryſtal pool" and ſalubrious ſea to all ciſterns and reſervoirs whatever. But delicacy and the valetudinarean ſtate are here excepted: to ſuch we recommend bathing houſes, machines, and ſuch like,

Cold bathing invigorates and gives ſtrength to mind and body. It is therefore to be recommended in all caſes of weakneſs from relaxation, where the muſcular and vaſcular parts are become ſoft and flabby; and where the arterial ſyſtem has loſt its due tone and contractile power.

In lowneſs of ſpirits and melancholy, Pour quelques maladies des organes de generation; ſavoir *gleets*—en anglois—& des emiſſions involontaires de la ſemence qui proviennent de relaxation.—Pour des affections du ſexe qui ſont auſſi dérivées d'une délicateſſe naturelle, et relaxation des organes.

Ces maladies ſont, *green-ſickneſs*; décharges d'une matiére, quelquefois, jaune: et ces maladies ſont toutes bien connuës à ceux qui en ont été affligées; mais l'amour de delicateſſe m'empeche d'en dire davantage.

In

In ſome perodical headachs without fever, cold bathing and the bark may effect a very good cure.

Topical or local ſea bathing, will alſo be found uſeful in caſes of ſcrophula and other glandular affections, drinking every morning a certain quantity of ſalt water as an alterative—not ſo as to purge; but to keep the body open.

After febrile diſeaſes, whereby the body has been much reduced and debilitated, the cold bath and the bark, will be attended with ſalutary effects.

I muſt obſerve, by the bye, that ſudden application of cold and a continuance of it, induces inſtant debility, and might injure a very delicate frame. But let not this remark deter too much.—I will be more explicit.

It may be thought ſtrange by thoſe unacquainted with phyſiology that what induces debility, ſhould likewiſe give ſtrength.

ſtrength. The ſtrongeſt animal by being expoſed to intenſe cold for a certain time will be gradually deprived of all the powers of life, and die in a ſtate of inſenſibility: but, if the ſame animal only immerſes itſelf in cold water for ſome minutes once or oftener every day, inſtead of becoming weak, it will become more and more robuſt; and all this will happen, notwithſtanding we perceive it every time it comes out of the bath in a ſtate of tremor, and agitation and debility; for theſe affections go quickly off by what is called re-action of the nervous power, on the heart and arteries, and other vital organs—and inſtantly there are ſenſations of glowing heat and vigorous health in every part.

I ſay, in all caſes of univerſal relaxation, the cold bath—the *ſea* bath, will do great ſervice; but, let it be remembered that no one ſhall immerſe himſelf unleſs

leſs perfectly cool and free from fever:—Yet, in the Weſt Indies, I have ſeen ſeamen come out of the hold of a ſugar ſhip drenched in ſweat, and jump inſtantly over board without any bad effects enſuing. I only mention this to ſhew what a healthy body can endure: but few of ſuch attend places of bathing.

Of the Amuſements.

IN Yarmouth there are no regular concerts, nor aſſemblies, nor plays, nor other polite diverſions throughout the year—not even during the bathing ſeaſon. A ſtranger might ſuppoſe it proceeded from a want of liberal ſentiment, and abſence of that ſpirit of genteelity and politeneſs which characterizes the inhabitants of other public places; but, this *(I will ſuppoſe)* would be a falſe hypotheſis, and will put it upon the footing of inattention by reaſon of the chief inhabitants being greatly

greatly engaged in the ſeveral departments of corn, flower, malt, mackrel and herring buſineſs:—by all which money is to be made; but none by inſtituting fiddling, dancing, and dramatic entertainments.

Thus, here, as yet, the graces are little attended to; and the muſes are not courted. I am ſorry for it; becauſe, wherever the graces are ſought after, and the muſes adored, there, rational taſte prevails, and that laudable principle, which always delights to *pleaſe* and inſtruct.

N. B. We ſhall ſay nothing of the public cuſtoms (I mean, of men and manners) until it may be neceſſary to publiſh a ſecond edition.

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